

BELMONT WARRANT COMMITTEE FY08 MEETING MINUTES
FINAL
APRIL 23, 2008, 7:30 P.M.
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM

Present: Vice Chair Brusch, Members Allison, Epstein, Heigham, Jones, Lynch, Oates, Paolillo, White, and Widmer; BOS Chair Firenze, School Committee Chair Bowe

Town Accountant Hagg, Town Administrator Younger, Assistant Town Administrator Conti, Town Treasurer Carman;

Absent: Chair Curtis; Members Callanan, Hofmann, McLaughlin

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Vice Chair Brusch.

Vice Chair Brusch began the meeting by outlining the evening's agenda - specifically outlining the order of the articles to be reviewed.

Article 3 - Transfer Balances Member Heigham moved to recommend approval on Article 3. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 4 - Budget Appropriation Vice Chair Brusch: Each item in this article is voted under a general heading. Subcommittee Chairs should be sure to read those sections that pertain to your budget and know where the differences are. Please look closely at increases and decreases from the previous year. (This will help prepare you to answer TM questions). Please discard February's version - that was a draft, this is real.

For the following sections, the WC moved to recommend approval (without substantive discussion). The motions passed unanimously:

- " General Government
- " Public Safety
- " Belmont Public Schools
- " Public Services
- " Culture and Recreation
- " Debt and Interest on Debt
- " Human Services
- " OPEB transfer of \$150K

Regarding the Minuteman Regional School, the WC moved to recommend approval. The motion passed unanimously. Member Paolillo noted that the budget process for Minuteman needed revision, accountability, and further analysis either from the WC or the SC. Vice Chair Brusch agreed and added that Member Callanan had recommend that the group (consisting of members from Arlington and Lexington) that had been meeting in the past be reconvened to meet again to discuss budget issues. This group exerted some influence on the budget process. Brusch also stated that Dr. Holland intends to be involved with the Minuteman in his retirement.

Article 9 - Position Classification - updated Vice Chair Brusch: The WC held off taking a position on this article two weeks ago. This week the WC received the updated FY09 Position Classification/Compensation Plan from Ms. Crimmins.

The WC moved to recommend approval. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 10 - Capital Expenditures Vice Chair Brusch: These expenditures are a regular part of the capital budget. The sum of \$2,174,00 does not include Chapter 90 funding. Under Public Safety Equipment, \$131K was spent. For Computer Equipment, \$138K was spent. Under Departmental Equipment, \$224,500 was spent on mostly on replacing various vehicles. BOS Chair Firenze asked what the justification was for picking these types of vehicles. He added that

it sends a message that he is "not at all comfortable with". Bruschi replied that Shift Commander vehicles get replaced every three years, but that the older models are not eliminated, but transferred to a different use. \$47K was allocated for backup generators, as the need for these became known when problems arose (Library and Homer Building) this past year. \$526K was spent on Building and Facility and Public Works Construction. The track was due to be resurfaced as part of its regular maintenance for \$103K (under Site Improvements).

Member Paolillo: The WC should expect detailed questions about these funding decisions at TM. We should be prepared to be asked if the town is taking the right approach, getting the best deal. We should know when and why certain vehicles are replaced, and at what mileage, etc. Member Heigham added that the issue of "greenness" should be anticipated as well.

With regard to the Pavement Management portion, Vice Chair Bruschi continued, \$1M will be allocated every single year whether or not the upcoming June override passes. If it does pass, the amount will be \$3.5M every year, subject to appropriation. Member Paolillo voiced concern that TM members may see this as a vote on the override. It must be made clear that this is not a vote for or against the override, but rather a vote to appropriate funding, if the override passes.

The WC moved to recommend approval on Article 10, funding for the above. The motion passed unanimously. Article 11 - Water & Sewer Enterprises The WC moved to approve Article 11. The motion passed unanimously.

The WC Revisits the Question of Article 20

Member Jones: Since Article 20 will be discussed at TM, I would like to discuss it here again.

Member Widmer motioned to reconsider the discussion of Article 20.

BOS Chair Firenze: Article 20 makes sense from a process standpoint. No developer can present its proposal to the Planning Board, without control of the property of Horne Road and the Parking Lot. If the motion is dismissed, a developer cannot proceed. The intended development would be stopped without the Planning Board being able to carry out its functions. Member Widmer: We need time to carry out these discussions further, to flesh out the parameters needed to guide the BOS. Once this is approved by TM (presumably in October), it is then appropriate to proceed.

It was noted that a vote had not been taken on the motion to reconsider Article 20. A vote was taken with 3 opposed and 9 in favor of reconsidering Article 20. The discussion continued.

Member Jones: (Responding to Member Widmer's comments from before the vote.) What then, would be the process going forward? Widmer replied: The BOS would work with neighbors and would continue to work out the parameters to the limits and the provisions of the proposal. The BOS would commit to satisfying the concerns of the residents as part of the overall process relating to Article 20. After which, Article 20 can be brought before to TM in October.

BOS Chair Firenze: The vital issue is the conditions under which these properties could be sold, which will allow the BOS to negotiate with the developer. Any proposals have to be in concert with what has been outlined in the overlay. There is nothing that can come out of further discussion. We need the ability to negotiate and to allow the developer to make a deal. I am not in favor of dismissing this article; it forces us into a lose/lose. The developer has no choice but to scrap the plan (he loses), and then the town will lose as well.

Member Widmer: The approach you are supporting creates the lose/lose. Until the concerns of the residents are addressed, this article will certainly lose at TM. We need to allow for a fair debate. In doing so, we send a message of responsibility to deal with the neighbors' concerns in a constructive way. I want the town to be in a position to present this in October and to have the neighbors and the WC supporting this article. Only then will it pass, which will then lead to the

development of Cushing Square. The present course it is on now, is one of failure. Member Epstein: I have concern that the parameters of the proposal are unknown. This proposal has surfaced quickly. My impulse is to go slowly, and to further educate the town.

BOS Chair Firenze: The developer will negotiate with the town through the Planning Board process. The neighbors also have a process to go through. It is unrealistic to expect a developer to put a proposal together without knowing the cost of the parking lot and Horne Road. It could be \$1M , or it could be zero. The BOS will negotiate with the best interest of the town in mind.

Member Widmer: The BOS should negotiate with the neighbors and then as a unified town - we will come together and succeed at TM. The vote to dismiss was to give this article a better chance of success in the fall.

Member Heigham moved the question. The motion passed with 10 in favor, two opposed. The WC then motioned to have the BOS dismiss Article 20. The motion passed with 10 in favor, two opposed. Minutes of Meetings, 4/9/2008, 4/16/2008 The minutes of April 9 were approved with one abstention. The minutes of April 16 were approved with 2 abstentions. Other Vice Chair Bruschi: The WC is slated to meet on Monday 4/28 at the High School. This is a "just in case meeting", but I anticipate it will not be needed. WC members will be notified for certain by Monday.

The WC's next meeting is May 14. The WC will not meet on May 21st, but will meet again on May 28th. The WC will meet only once or twice in June. Member Heigham moved that the WC adjourn at 9:09 pm.

Submitted by Lisa Gibalerio
WC Recording Secretary